



Food Not Bombs literature tables

SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY

When I feed the hungry, they call me a saint. When I ask why the hungry don't have enough food, they call me a Communist. - Helder Pessoa Camara, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Olinda and Recife Brazil

SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY FLYER Food Not Bombs flyers to print for your literature table

Meals without a message is just charity and supports the system of exploitation. The Food Not Bombs literature table is one of the most effective ways to change society. With the global economic, political and environmental crisis growing more urgent it has never been more important to be as effective as possible at inspiring change. The Food Not Bombs meal can be one of the most powerful ways to encourage public to work for peace, social justice, animal rights and the protection of the environment. We are often the only activists visible to our communities. Reclaim public space, challenge austerity, and encourage social change.

Food Not Bombs is not a charity. It is organizing to change society so no one is forced to stand in line to eat at a soup kitchen. Meals without a banner and literature is just charity sending a message of support for the current political and economic system of exploitation. Our banner, literature and conversation with the public is as important as the healthy organic vegan meals we share. Ending the system where people are so poor they are required to seek food from charities is central to the goals of Food Not Bombs.

The authorities know how powerful it is for Food Not Bombs to have literature and a banner at every meal so they make an effort to discourage this part of our work. And their policies have been effective. Chapters that do not bring flyers and a banner feed far less people and find it hard to get volunteers and food donations. When the public passes by our meals and sees over a hundred people gathering to eat under the banner Food Not Bombs this can have a strong impact on people that might otherwise have never considered the issue. With 50 cents of every tax dollar going to the military it is no wonder why the United States is unable or willing to fund education, healthcare and other programs for the public. The literature can inspire a conversation between those depending on the food and those who have access to regular meals. As a result housed people discover that our homeless friends share many of the same desires and concerns and this can be transformative. Many people who depend on free meals tend to travel in the same circles rarely interacting with people who do not frequent soup kitchens. This can be very

disempowering and contribute to remaining in trapped in a system that lacks dignity. When someone passes by our meal and there is no literature they assume the food is only for the hungry and homeless and they do not stop to talk with the people gathered to eat. The presence of literature at the Saturday meal in Reykjavik inspired a spirited conversation that evolved into a weekly march after lunch to the parliament building and after a few months the protests were so large the government fell. (SEE PHOTO OF SIGN IN ICELAND AT BOTTOM)

On the other hand we have talked with people who ate at meals that did not have literature and they report that there is almost no conversation about social issues and that the only people eating with the group are those people that require a free meal. Interaction with a diverse public is absent and offers of food donations, invitations to provide food at other groups actions and new volunteers are rare.

A number of Food Not Bombs groups in the United States have been able to reduce their influence and the number of people they feed by not only by failing to have literature and a banner but also because they share food at a time and location where few will ever see them. Some groups set up in the center of parks where no one will ever pass or they bring their meals late at night when no one other than the more hungry people will visit.

The San Francisco police made nearly 1,000 arrests, beat volunteers and charged Food Not Bombs activists with felonies. The police almost always took the banner and literature first. The police told the media that they didn't mind that we were sharing food but that they had to arrest us because we were making a political statement and that isn't allowed.

We encourage you to display your banner and set out literature at every meal. Your group can also set up literature tables at concerts and in public locations between your regular meals. Your Food Not Bombs group can be effective at inspiring social change if your volunteers make a point of engaging the public in conversation about subjects like diverting resources from the military toward necessities like nutritious food, education and healthcare. While several volunteers are sharing meals and distributing groceries another volunteer can staff the literature table. They can let pedestrians know that Food Not Bombs shares free vegan and vegetarian meals with the hungry in over 1,000 cities around the world to protest war, poverty and the destruction of the environment and add the notion that with over a billion people going hungry each day how can we spend another dollar on war? Your chapter can have a committee of volunteers that gather literature from other groups, print out Food Not Bombs literature and make sure it is displayed at every meal with banners. This way the cooks and people sharing the meal can focus on that important task. They may also staff the literature table during the meal and at other events inviting conversation about current issues and encouraging the public to participate in protests and other activities. This committee can also invite people to play music, have puppet shows or other activities to build community at the regular meals.

We have seen that Food Not Bombs groups will increase the number of people volunteering, get more food donations and that the number of people enjoying the group's food also increases when literature and a banner is displayed at each meal. Add your local chapter's contact information on your flyers. Your chapter can also collect stacks of flyers about many issues by contacting other activist groups. They will be happy that you are helping them reach the public. Print or collect at least 100 copies and use a number 19 rubber band to hold them together. Your chapter can have a water proof box and pack it with the largest flyers on the bottom and topped off with your Food Not Bombs banner. Take the box out to every meal, hang the banner and set out the literature in neat rows.



Police take banner in Flagstaff, Arizona. They left the food to be shared.

The U.S. government has a nationwide campaign against our bringing literature and a banner to our meals because they know it is one of the most effective ways for Food Not Bombs to encourage resistance to their policies. Authorities have told our volunteers that they can share food but not have a banner or literature. The authorities have also sent informants to volunteer to bring the banner and literature and discard them in a dumpster on the way to the meal. When this fails they will arrest the volunteers for having a banner and flyers even though this is protected under the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Our tables can also include music, theater, poetry, dance, art and other cultural expressions encouraging positive social change. Our goal is to end the need to feed the hungry by inspiring the public to take the action necessary for society to redirect our resources from the military towards real security where everyone has what they need to flourish.

Besides providing literature at your regular meals you can table without food. If you look around your community you will find a good location where there are many pedestrians. Figure out the times and days when the most people would walk by. See if there are trees, utility poles or a wall where you can hang your Food Not Bombs banner. You can also make a banner that can drape over the front of your table. Plan to show up for several hours each week. Set up your literature for a couple hours and invite passers by to find out about the work of Food Not Bombs. Between your regular meals your group can set up a distro, place some cookies on a plate and talk with your community. You are sure to encourage people to volunteer and participate in your regular meals. You can also set up a literature table at concerts and other events. The more we speak with the public the more we will build interest in changing the world. After all one reason there are so many Food Not Bombs groups is because people learned of our work by talking with us at our literature tables.

The Food Not Bombs literature table can have announcements of future protests, factual literature about why we share vegan meals, global warming and the environment, the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine, the globalization of the economy and threats to human rights. You might have a petition for people to sign. Talk with

people who walk pass your table inviting them to check out your information or asking them to sign your petition. One on one conversations make a more lasting impression than mass media.

You can add cookies or ice tea to the table and see for yourself how effective the Food Not Bombs literature table can be. You will see new faces at your protests. You will find new volunteers and with a regular table you will make lasting connections with people you might otherwise have never met.

Always provide literature at your regular meal. Put your food on half the table and literature on the other half. You can even organize two days. One that is your regular meal and another one that is less work where you just provide snacks.

Its simple yet very effective.



The San Francisco Police take our banner and literature seeking to silence our message

The U.S. government has a nationwide campaign against our bringing literature and a banner to our meals because they know it is one of the most effective ways for Food Not Bombs to encourage resistance. Food Not Bombs is not a charity. It is organizing to change society. The government arrests Food Not Bombs to silence our message because they know we are effective when we share literature and vegan meals under the banner of Food Not Bombs. Meals without a message is just charity and supports the system of exploitation. The government and military contractors feel that our literature tables are effective so they have been known to take our flyers, banners and arrested our volunteers. The authorities are so concerned about our literature tables that they have been telling groups that they can share food as long as they don't hand out flyers and post banners. Police informants have been suggesting that the literature and banner are not important and that it is "only about the food." Police infiltrators have been volunteering to bring the literature and end up discarding the flyers on the way to our meals.

Police infiltrators have been volunteering to bring the literature and end up discarding the flyers on the way to our meals. One of the San Francisco chapters arrives with food but never brings literature or banner. While Food Not Bombs is sharing meals a christian group hands out bible literature. For years our office has been getting calls from people who went to the meal wanting to help Food Not Bombs but discovered that a church group was feeding the hungry and left. If that group had brought a banner and literature they would have had many more volunteers and donations of food. Susie Cagle witnessed this group and published a book [Nine Gallons](#) describing the chapter as being nothing more then nine gallons of soup with out a message or impact. Her participation was so discouraging she was moved to illustrate the frustrating attempt to volunteer with the worlds most famous Food Not Bombs chapter. Had she known Susie could have organized a literature table and displayed a Food Not Bombs banner and discovered that there were many capable people that wanted to help but had no idea that it was Food Not Bombs or believed our movement was so disorganized it wasn't worth dedicating time to. Considering the amount of violence, jail time and effort activists had undergone in an attempt to reach the public with the message of change it was disappointing to see that Susie's graphic novel was a realistic reflection of the United Nations meal. If that group started to bring literature and a banner it might be one of our most effective chapters. As it is now they have no need to fear being arrested as it is invisible. When asked if Food Not Bombs had already shared dinner the people who had just finished eating said they didn't know. If the people eating don't know they ate at Food Not Bombs how can we expect the general public to realize the intentions of our movement?

The government never arrests church groups. Church groups are not feeding to hungry in an effort to challenge the system. Capitalism is fine. If people worked hard and believed in god they would not be on the streets seeking food.

Because that meal at United Nations Plaza is thought of as the most important of all our actions because of San Francisco Food Not Bombs history new volunteers reproduce the model in their communities reducing the number of people they could be feeding and making it hard to attract volunteers, food donations and promoting the impression that the current political and economic system is acceptable. We have seen the decline of Food Not Bombs in areas of the United States influenced by the meal at the United Nations. This can be reversed by a couple of people volunteering to bring literature and a banner to this most important meal. The impact can be even greater if the meal was shared from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM when thousands of people pass by on their way home from work. Since so many people come to participate in this iconic Food Not Bombs meal it would be wonderful if someone would volunteer to make sure it always has a banner and literature. Other meals in San Francisco are adopting this model and finding an increase interest in their activities so we know it can be effective at United Nations Plaza.



The first arrest in Orlando, Florida

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the government that handing out literature and vegan meals under the banner Food Not Bombs is a threat and can be stopped by the government. They ruled against Food Not Bombs on April 12, 2011 claiming we can reach enough people if we request a permit to share food and literature twice a year per park in Orlando, Florida. As soon as the court made this ruling other cities announced they would adopt their own restrictive laws. Food Not Bombs plans to defy the courts, military contractors and government by always bring a Food Not Bombs banner and literature to your vegan meals. [Read the April 12, 2011 Ruling by the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta.](#)

Food Not Bombs is not a charity. It is an effort to end the political and economic causes of hunger and poverty.

The literature or distro has helped inspire conversations that grew into projects like Indymedia and Homes Not Jails. Literature has even encouraged conversations that have lead to social change including uprisings.

Check out these site to find information for your table.

SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY FLYER

FOOD NOT BOMBS FLYERS YOU CAN COPY FOR YOUR TABLE

VEGAN OUTREACH - Free literature for your table about ending animal cruelty and eating vegan. They are happy to provide your group with great literature.



This is one of many signs at the Food Not Bombs table in Iceland that inspired conversation and protest against the government and banks.

Food Not Bombs flyers to print for your literature table
Print these outs and place a stack on your table.

FOOD NOT BOMBS PRESENTATION

One way to involve more people in your local Food Not Bombs group is to host a presentation. Contact your local college or university and see if any student groups would be interested in a presentation.

NEWS FOR LITERATURE

You can visit these sites and use the information you find here to make flyers about current events.

FOOD NOT BOMBS

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[Start a Food Not Bombs group](#)

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